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THE
BLESSINGS
OF
WOOBURN, BUCKS.

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By the Rev. T. ENGLISH.

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THE Author of this little piece has in this village been labouring in the word and doctrine more than twenty years. During this period he has had the great pleasure of seeing the gospel spread all around. He presents this to his dear people with a view to remind them of all the way in which the good Lord has led them as a church, and to perpetuate the recollection of their privileges.



THE
BLESSINGS
OF
WOOBURN, BUCKS.

WHEN Moses stood, and cast his eyes around
From Pisgah's top, and view'd the holy ground,
His faithful soul was seiz'd with glad surprise,
And joys ecstatic sparkled in his eyes;
In pleasing hope he Canaan had in view,
The promis'd land, and Jacob's portion too:
The favour'd tribes he realiz'd as there
At rest; from all the painful toils of war,
From bondage freed, and cruel Pharaoh's hand:
The rolling waves obey the high command.
Jehovah led them through the dang'rous seas:
They fear'd, believ'd, and sang his glorious praise.

The sons of might resist their force in vain,
 And melt as wax o'er all th' embattled plain;
 Their martial courage and proud strength decay,
 The palm they yield—*that* Joshua bore away;
 In triumph brought the conqu'ring tribes to rest
 In Canaan's heights, with all abundance blest.
 The howling desart, and the burning plain,
 Hunger, or thirst, or fiery serpent's pain,
 They dread no more: happy beyond compare,
 Jehovah-Shamma is recorded there.

The rich confection of the flow'ry field,
 The lofty rocks a vast profusion yield;
 'Tis there the active, busy, toiling bee
 Treasures the rich fruits of its industry.*
 The spreading vines o'er all their mountains
 stand,
 Nor Israel knows of any barren land.
 Their cov'nant God doth every gift bestow;
 While they obey, no indigence they know.
 The prophet's entrance here his God denied,
 Yet his keen eyes diviner lands espied,

* The bees deposit their honey in the rocks; the olives
 grow among the rocks. Deut. xxxii. 13.

Their brighter prospects his glad soul inspire,
 His spirit glow'd with pure seraphic fire.
 He prais'd his God for Israel's portion giv'n,
 But more for grace, for Jesus, and for heav'n.

Thus, from the top of Clifdon's pleasing
 height,*

Mine eyes survey the valley with delight.
 The golden orb effulgent shines around,
 All nature smiles while with its glories crown'd.
 Thou greater Sun! with thy celestial rays
 Illume my soul to sing thy brighter praise.
 Now may each object rising to my view
 Impart instruction, and my joys renew.
 Ye gilded scenes, with your enchanting smile
 Charm all my soul, and each sad thought beguile.
 There glides fair Thames to meet the swelling tide,
 The queen of rivers, and Londini's pride:
 Her floating wealth from distant ports is brought,
 Her shipping rides with costly blessings fraught;
 Her various rich and far-fetch'd treasure sends
 Through Britain's isle, and every part befriends.

* Clifdon is a high hill commanding the valley of Wootton, where formerly stood a house, the residence of the late prince of Wales; but now in ruins by fire.

In rich array her fertile margin 's seen-
To smile and flourish in its lasting green.

Yon river Bourne* swift down its channel
flows,

Dispensing health and plenty as it goes;
Its strength collecting whirls the mighty wheel
That factures paper and prepares the meal;
The dwellings there of many friends I see,
Friends to the poor, religion, and to me.
The sylvan-groves, attir'd in green array,
Just wave their tops as gentle zephyrs play;
Then bow their heads as higher breezes rise,
And pay obedience to the ruling skies.
The gentle winds their spicy odours spread,
And cheer as we the pleasing landscape tread.
But let me breathe the purer air divine,
That healthful spirit, O my God, of thine.
With pleasing rapture see the fruitful fields,
Their vast increase high satisfaction yields;
There anxious toil and agitated hopes
Are crown'd with plenty and enriching crops.
The teeming earth her weighty burden bears,
Checks our distrust and banishes our fears,

* A river arising above Wycombe.

While gently bending see the whiten'd ear,
 Ripe for the sickle and the reaper's care.
 How great thy goodness, O thou most supreme!
 How great thy beauty, and how high thy fame!

Here nature forms a most delightful spot,
There Providence assigns my peaceful lot;
 Enclos'd around, in solitude I dwell
 Within my shady and romantic dell.*
 Here are the borders of my dwelling fixt,
 And countless mercies with my trials mixt.
 The poor must find this world a vale of tears;
 "Without are fightings, and within are fears;"
 But kind connexions soothe the rugged road,
 And ease the mind of its oppressive load;
 While here I live, O may I live to thee,
 Thou spring of life, and life's felicity.

A mitred lord, as old traditions say,†
 Our valley rul'd with proud papistic sway.
 Here faith implicit, and devotion blind,
 With strongest fetters bound the human mind;

* The author's house is called the *Dell-house*.

† The original great house at Wooburn was a bishop's palace. Adjoining to the chapel was a place called *Little Ease*, where the victims of papistical fury could find no ease. This prison is still in the recollection of the aged.

And ev'ry senseless legendary tale
 Obtain'd firm credit through this darken'd vale.
 Yet not o'er all did such delusion reign,
 Some dar'd to burst the antichristian chain.
 Here *Chase* and *Harding* did resist to blood,
 And martyrs suffer'd for the truth of God.*

Since much renown'd for gen'rous *Wharton's*
 seat,

A bright example for the wise and great;
 Historic page his name will ever grace,
 A friend to *William*, *liberty*, and *peace*.
 His noble mind to higher objects soar'd,
 The King of kings he reverenc'd and ador'd.
 His household witness'd his devotion pure,
 He welcom'd there the pious and the poor;
 They came from far to join in praise and pray'r,
 And often found the God of Israel there.
Owen and *Manton*, friendly join'd in heart,
 Did here the myst'ries of the word impart.
 Sublimer *Bates*, fam'd for his silver tongue,
 To him did crowded audiences throng,
 And on his lips with admiration hung;

* See Fox's Martyrology, page 940.

There fed the souls of many neighbours round.
 There was the word with great successes crown'd;
 The Saviour's glories in their brightness shone,
 Nor we bewail these precious blessings gone.
 The pious *Wharton* lov'd the word of God,
 And by his will still spreads it far abroad.
Wooburn he favour'd by his last bequest,
 Its poor are now with *yearly bibles* blest;
 The well-appointed psalms they learn and say,
 They're pleas'd to bear the goodly prize away;
 A prize indeed, surpassing human thought,
 With ev'ry precious heav'nly blessing fraught.
 May *Wharton's gift* from age to age endure,
 A pattern to the rich, a blessing to the poor.*

Our mercies flow as flows yon limpid stream,
 Not angels' tongues their magnitude proclaim.
 The great Jehovah still displays his grace,
 Reveals his Son, our righteousness and peace.
 Through all our vale the turtle's voice aloud
 Proclaims the virtues of Immanuel's blood.

* Ten bibles are regularly distributed among the poor children of *Wooburn* by order of Lord *Wharton's* trustees.

By neighb'ring hills and dales the sound is heard,
 They echo back, " Salvation to the Lord."
 Responsive thus the vales and hills resound
 Our Jesu's praise, and glories spread around.
 There *faithful Blackwell** lifts his voice on high,
 And often finds his blessed Master nigh.
 He many years in constant labours sought
 The good of souls, nor spent his strength for
 nought.

The pious poor upon his lips have hung;
 Have heard with joy, and sov'reign mercy sung.
 His *weak* attempts, as by the *wiser* thought,
 Jehovah bless'd, and mighty wonders wrought.
 The weak are strong if Jesus deign to own,
 The strong are weak if Jesus be withdrawn;
 His homely style, and applications plain,
 Oft reach'd the heart when eloquence was vain.
 Great Paul may plant with pious care and toil,
 And good Apollos water all the soil;
 But their attempts are ineffectual found,
 If God's rich blessings visit not the ground.

* This little poem was written many years before the death of this valuable character, who, as in his life, so in his death, singularly glorified God. See his funeral sermon, published by T. English.

Bow to your God, ye sons of *Levi's* line,
 Nor dare dispute prerogative divine;
 'Tis his to choose what instruments he will,
 Nor shall they fail his counsels to fulfil.
 Ye trembling heralds of the King of kings,
 O! trust his pow'r, for he doth wondrous things.

Next, in due time, Jehovah rais'd a youth,
 Form'd for his work and zealous for his truth,
 A kind relation's tender charge and care,
 The constant subject of her fervent pray'r.
 He to the ancient seat of science went,
 With pious mind on useful studies bent.
 The downy doctors there, unus'd to such,
 Were griev'd that some were "righteous over
 much;"

Yet few there were of this complexion found,
 But six are seen of many hundreds round;
 Their great offence was preaching, praise, and
 pray'r,

As no such practice could be sanction'd there.
 Lest others should receive contagious breath,
 They were condemn'd to "academic death."*

* See a pamphlet called "The Shaver" by M'Gowan, and
 "Pietas Oxoniensis" by Sir Richard Hill.

How deep the counsel of Jehovah lies!
 His plans are all unfathomably wise.
 Men from discordant motives often act,
 And give the great designs of heav'n effect.
 Dear *Grove*, expell'd, returns to his abode,
 And consecrates his dwelling to his God.
 With fervent zeal he preach'd the sacred word,
 And numbers hearing turn'd unto the Lord.
 His pious care propos'd a larger house
 For God, and there they paid their solemn vows;
 His faithful labours heav'n did greatly own,
 And many deck'd his ministerial crown.

There others preach'd, nor labour'd they in
 vain,

They flew as clouds, as doves the windows gain.
 Thus were they favour'd with a large increase;
 United too in harmony and peace,
 They built for God a more convenient place.
 There may the youth the holy scriptures hear,
 And e'er attend with reverential fear;
 Their early offerings to Jehovah pay,
 And always tread the consecrated way.
 There may decrepid and decaying age
 Enjoy the comforts of the sacred page,

And, when by death's terrific fears assail'd,
 Jehovah trust, who never Israel fail'd.
 There may the simple be divinely taught,
 The weak and feeble on their way be brought,
 The tried and tempted needful succour find,
 The wretched, too, believe the Saviour kind.
 There may the rebel throw his arms away,
 And at the feet of sov'reign mercy lay.
 There may the poor of rural Wooburn feed
 On heav'nly bread, and find it food indeed.
 The rich enrich'd with blessings from above,
 And poor and rich the highest blessings prove.
 There may the truth's resplendent glories shine,
 And thousands feel the energy divine.
 O may it, Lord, from age to age endure,
 Nor peaceful Wooburn want the gospel more.
 Amen.

THOMAS ENGLISH.

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